

Appl. No.: 09/929,147
Amdt. dated January 9, 2004
Reply to Office action of October 9, 2003

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant received the Office action dated October 9, 2003, in which the Examiner rejected claims 1-7, 10-12, 15-18, 20, 22-25, 27, 29-32, 34, 36-39, 41, 43-46, 48, 50-53 and 55 as obvious over Macon, with some of these claims being rejected over the combination of Macon and other references. The Examiner also indicated that claims 8-9, 13-14, 19, 21, 26, 28, 33, 35, 40, 42, 47, 49, 54 and 56 contained allowable subject matter.

In this Response, Applicant amends all independent claims to require a usage counter that indicates the number of sets of adjacent bits are set in words of the second data structure (referred to as the directory structure in some claims). Based on the Examiner's stated reasons for concluding that dependent claims 8, 13, 19, 26, 33, 40, 47 and 54 contain allowable subject matter (i.e., that none of the art teaches or suggests counters for indicating how many sets of adjacent bits are set in the words of the directory bitmap), the Examiner should find, at least for this reason, that all claims are now in condition for allowance. The amendments to the independent claims necessitated amendments to various dependent claims and cancellation of other dependent claims as should be readily apparent from the amendments above.

Applicant added claim 57 to depend from claim 1 and require that the number of sets of adjacent bits can be 2, 4, 8, 16, 32 or 64 as was specified in claim 8 that the Examiner concluded was allowable.

Applicant also removed the limitation "container" from claims 1 and 15 because such limitation is deemed necessary for patentability. Corresponding amendments were made to claims 2 and 3.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If any fees or time extensions are inadvertently omitted or if any fees have been overpaid, please appropriately charge or credit

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those fees to Hewlett-Packard Company Deposit Account Number 08-2025 and enter any time extension(s) necessary to prevent this case from being abandoned.

Respectfully submitted,



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